

Welsh docklands gets big arts cash injection

A MAJOR new arts centre will be the centrepiece of ambitious plans to revitalize Cardiff Docks, announced last week by the Welsh Office.

Speaking at the launch of the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, Welsh secretary Nicholas Edwards said a "design study" by the Welsh Arts Council would be commissioned immediately.

He also said the arts centre could be the new home of the Welsh National Opera although this was not a "realistic proposition in the next two or three years" because of the scale of resources needed.

An advisory group, set up by the Welsh Office, discussed the

possibility of a design competition to secure a building of "major importance".

The group — whose members included architect Gordon Bowyer — also discussed the

possibility of housing the opera in the courtyard of the National Museum of Wales.

The idea was dropped in favour of an earlier scheme by the museum's architects, the Alex Gordon Partnership, to use the courtyard for a new visual arts centre.

Final space in the new museum gallery for paintings and sculpture will double to 3,000sq

m with between 500sq and 800sq m for temporary exhibitions.

Open-plan galleries are planned offering a "grand vista" approach with the air-conditioning and lighting facilities the museum has always lacked.

The scheme will also include an audio-visual theatre, a restaurant, shop and information centre.

He also said more resources would be made available for the Welsh National Folk Museum at St Fagans, near Cardiff, and agreed to a major refurbishment of the New Theatre to provide better facilities.

A third site for the opera house at Dute West Dock, currently undergoing major redevelopment by Trmsec, has

been dropped because of its proximity to a giant steelworks.

This cash injection for the arts was announced along with plans to set up a urban development corporation for Cardiff's docklands.

A Welsh Office spokesman said the new corporation would be very different from those operating in London and Merseyside.

Edwards said the "bold and ambitious plan" is unique because it has the full co-operation of the local authorities involved.

"This is quite different from other places where the government has had to impose an organisation on unwilling local authorities," he said.

● A report commissioned by the Welsh Office from international property consultants Jones Lang Wootton also emphasised the need for top quality architects.

"Top quality architectural and design standards are important ingredients, possibly through the preparation of well-defined briefs for individual sites, but also through the encouragement of the use of first-class architects and architectural competitions," said the report.

By Amanda Ballieu

US practice raises cash

AMERICAN architects Tribbick Harris Li raised the \$4 million they were looking for this week from their USM notation.

Trading in the 3.6 million shares on offer opened on

Monday at a modest premium of 9p on the placing price of 112p. As *BD* went to press, the share price was holding firm at 121p.

The placing values the first time around £14 million.

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Imperial Hotel, Torquay
16/17 January 1987

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Is our planning process working
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Many of our finest provincial town centres were
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This conference investigates what makes towns tick,
and how much community involvement, good
planning, good architecture and sensitive
conservation can contribute to prosperity.

Torquay, currently embroiled in a new planning row,
serves as an apt example, but the purpose of the
conference ranges far wider, from looking at the
potential for government incentive for inner city and
town centre regeneration to the role of trusts,
developers, pension funds and other sources of
finance.

We will be looking at other specific examples:
Oxne, Chesterfield, Edinburgh, Lancaster, Leeds,
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and others.

Speakers will include:

Tony Aldous; Tom Forde of English Heritage
Charles Knevil, new Director of Inner City Aid
Gordon Mitchell; Geoffrey Mitchell
of Feltham & Mansour
Ken Powell of SAVE

Teresa Sladen of the Victorian Society
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and John McSherry, the man from the PRU

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★ What towns or cities particularly concern you?

★ What are your reasons for concern?

★ Do you see a need for a national campaign
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★ Would you consider subscribing to such a
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★ Other comments

Please return within 10 days and enclose any other
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Contact name and address

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Telex: 8811418
as soon as possible

Acanthus



As a result of extensive market research, the Birmingham Visitor & Commerce Centre has decided to increase the capacity of the new International Centre.

Designed by the Percy Thomas Partnership and Renton Howard Willis it is due for completion in 1991. The centre is to have two further halls to 400 more people to use the facilities, increasing the total capacity to 9,000.

The number of halls is being increased to a total of eleven, with four new suites, each capable of holding meetings of up to 40 people.

Rogers sets competition

RICHARD Rogers is to be the main assessor for the fifth RIBA International Design Competition for architecture students.

His theme, "New in the Old" will ask entrants to design a new public building for an existing urban space of their choice.

Details will be sent to schools shortly and submissions must reach the RIBA by Friday, May 1.

● The inaugural RIBA President's Medals, the student counterpart of the Royal Gold Medal, were announced this week.

See page 2

YRM triple in Swindon

THAMESDOWN planners have granted planning consent to the Tricentre 3 — the next phase of the YRM's big complex in Swindon, designed jointly by YRM and Peter Carter.

Work on the new 6,000sq m building will start next week. Allied Dunbar already owns the site and the catalogue of follies of

the architectural team — the new yard Life Centre and the shaped Tricentre 1 block — by.

These two buildings were the subject of a planning application to the council.

Lutyens relative support

LUTYENS' grand-daughter, Celia, has voiced her opposition to Greycoat's proposals for Lutyens House in Finsbury Park in the City.

As revealed in *BD* last week, the developer has appointed additional architects in an attempt to win detailed listed building consent for an atrium

to transpose this 80s non-nonsense into a fine example of a Lutyens building in London.

Old-fashioned (Edwardian) Lutyens House, designed by the architect's son, is to be destroyed to make way for the new building.

The new building is to be a modern interpretation of the original Lutyens House, designed by the architect's son, is to be destroyed to make way for the new building.

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Drawings Collection delay

I WON'T SIGN YET, SAYS NEW CURATOR

THE proposed new RIBA Drawings Collection curator has still not signed a contract for the job he was offered more than a month ago.

Although Cambridge-based Thomas Cocke verbally accepted the post, he told *BD* this week that he would

By John Wood

not formally accept until the dispute over deputy curator Jill Lever was resolved.

Her union, the Association of Scientific Technical & Managerial Staff has protested against Cocke's appointment. It believes Lever, who has worked for the RIBA since 1959 and as deputy curator since 1970, is the best qualified candidate.

The union hopes the dispute can be settled internally, but depending on the outcome of a meeting today (Friday) it will consider industrial action in the New Year.

ASTMS has also been advised that it could bring an action against the institute under the Sex Discrimination Act.

Cocke, who is an investigator with the Historic Monuments Commission, was due to

start work as the curator on January 5. He admitted this would be unlikely even if the dispute was settled swiftly.

But he said he would be able to take up the post shortly after he formally accepted.

Reports that the collection's move had been scrapped by RIBA policy committee could not be confirmed as *BD* went to press.

The last curator, John Harris, resigned over plans to move the collection — and president-elect Rod Hackney has pledged to bring him back in a significant role which could affect Cocke.

And opponents to the move are lobbying hard for their solution to the Holm Gallery's space problems.

Home House, at 20 Portman Square, and its neighbour 19, become available in 1989 when the Courtauld Institute moves to Somerset House.

It has been suggested that the gallery's space problems could be solved and a new institute of architectural history formed by combining the buildings.

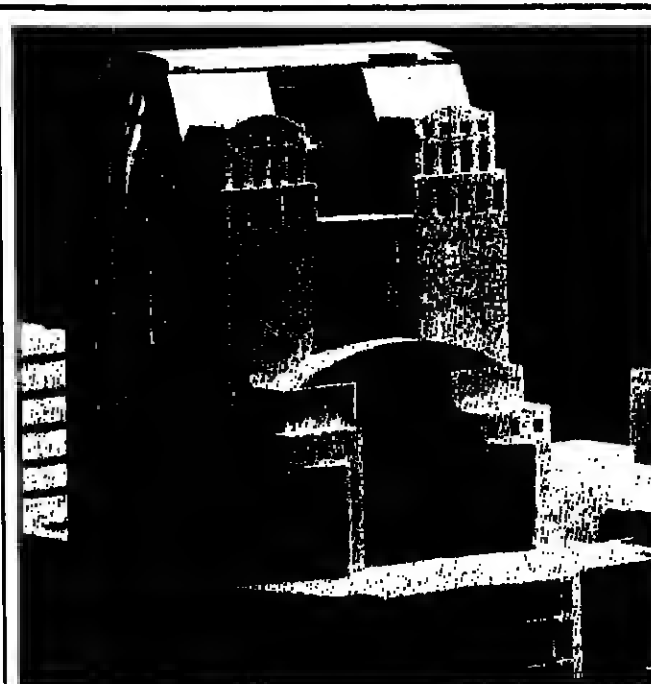
Our next issue

BD is taking its annual Christmas break. The next issue will appear on January 9, 1987.

Tenants accuse council of safety 'cover-up'

TENANTS living in high-rise blocks of Reema system-built flats in Leeds are accusing the city council of a cover-up over structural conditions.

The Deane Tenants Association alleges that vital information found by consultant engineer



Terry Farrell's latest London Wall scheme.

City gets generous over office permits

In an end-of-year planning bonanza, the City Corporation planning committee approved nearly 300,000sq m of offices this week.

Terry Farrell won the unanimous approval for his scheme to replace Moor House on London Wall (pictured).

The 27,000sq m 19-storey building has yet to get consent from the Court of Common Council, where his Alban Gate scheme for MEPC failed to win permission a few weeks ago.

The council is to consider the latest development on January 8, but as the building does not block views from the Barbican, and offers considerable planning gain, support is likely.

Nevertheless, the next few weeks are likely to be an anxious time for Farrell and the owner of Moor House, Scottish Amicable Life Assurance.

Three levels of specialty shopping and restaurants are included in the lower parts of the building while new walkways link across London Wall and to St. Albans Highwalk on the northern side of the 1960s street.

Three dealer floors of around 2,700sq m form the base of the building, over the retailing space. In all 22,300sq m of offices will be provided.

Other permissions included the first two phases of Reshaping St. Albans proposals for the Bishopsgate frontage of the Broadgate

Energy group's regulation worries

PROPOSALS to scrap requirements for energy saving in industrial and storage buildings have been slammed by the Association for the Conservation of Energy.

The proposals came in the second stage review of the Building Regulations being conducted by the DoE.

Other suggestions aimed at saving more energy in homes and other buildings were welcomed by the association.

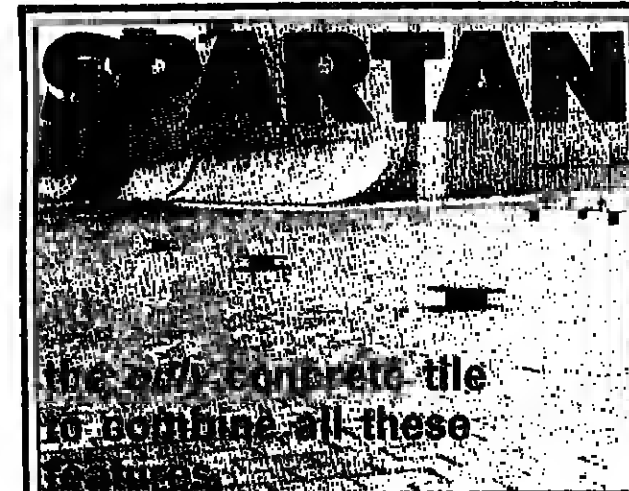
ACE director Andrew Warren called the industrial proposals "a very alarming step", especially in "Monocry year".

Warren said the DoE thought that businessmen commissioning such buildings would automatically specify buildings which conserved energy.

This theory fell down when it came to speculative buildings, developed with no particular user in mind. The developer would not have to conform to any minimum energy requirements.

In addition to industrial and storage buildings the DoE's new regulations aim "to save in a cost-effective way about 20 per cent of the energy required for space heating in a typical house, and to improve energy in offices, shops and other buildings".

The first round of consultation will last until March 31.



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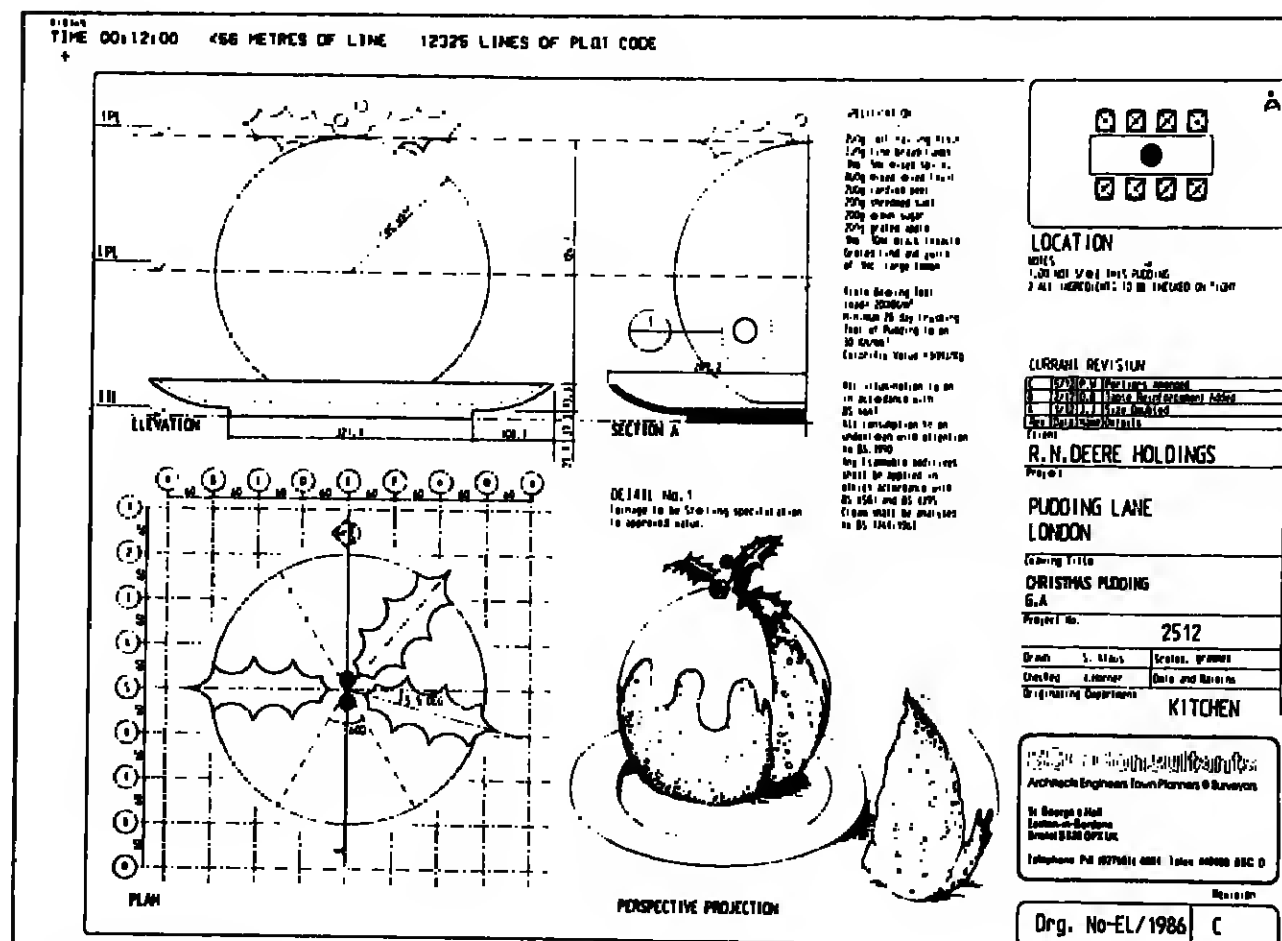
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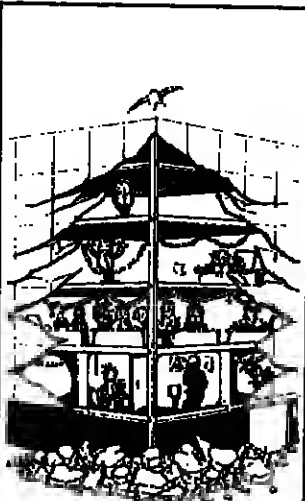
Rostrum



The culinary winner of this year's magnum of champagne—SSC Consultants of Bristol.

Christmas cheer!

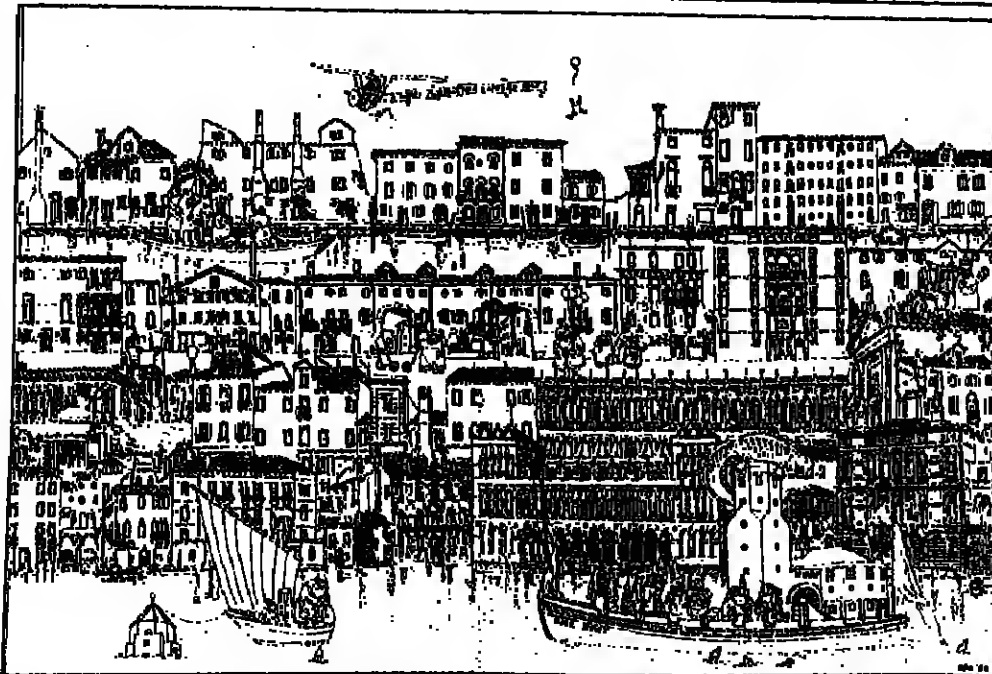
We review this year's architect-designed Christmas cards — the winner is above, honouree mentions below, and a mention to Yekalay Associates for a clever idea which we would have trouble reproducing.



JTL Architects — wishing clients a satisfying Christmas and a cracking New Year, presumably in the spirit of Roman Point.



Above: Card designed for Borrow-In-Furness. Chris Sooty by Borrow-In-Furness. Below: The RIAS card, designed and drawn by Graham Wylie.



Immediate drawings as usual from Richard Rold.



Curl up with a stocking filler

Alan Blenc picks some light reading for Christmas and the New Year.

MY selection is based on those books that have given me the greatest pleasure in 1986. Some reflect my need for well-written English while working for eight months on the West Coast of the US earlier in the year.

Times past, there was a shared list with Walter Segal, and an overlap exists from those days with the works of Freya Stark; since Walter's reading pace ran to three volumes a week as compared with my staid consumption of a book per fortnight I start therefore with Miss Stark, my particular favourite read last December and January being *The Southern Gates of Arabia* and *A Winter in Arabia*, both reprints published by Century Publishing Co.

There are companion diaries by the author that run from 1928 through to 1939 and World War II, which describe the continuous thread of recent history in the Emerald Crescent and the growing trials and tribulations of Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.

There is superb descriptive writing of places and townships, the most interesting architectural pieces relating to the Euphrates valley and southern Arabia before war or oil wealth ruined the natural vernacular. It's worth providing this quote on Shibam Wadi Hadhramaut Yemen to whet the appetite:

"As we got nearer, its sides showed the same little beehive holes, the same vertical fissures, as the ancient cliff sides. But it wasn't cliff — it was Shibam, 500 houses all crowded together in a narrow space in the middle of the valley, with a huge graveyard in a hollow beside it. We got near it into bumpy ground, with palms and ditches; the long cliffs of the side valleys open away from it, and we saw it through face-top palms, the houses rising seven storeys or so, their narrow white decorated tops giving them a look as if they leant back away from us; a little mosque is clustered in their shadows, squashed up among them, its minaret and cupola reaching shoulder high, another little white mosque in front like lee — it is all delicate work of trellis and wave in mud, white and made smooth and shiny, and then pink with dust."

"The houses have long straight shafts let into their sides for drainage, which makes them even taller and more like skyscrapers; we went round the outer ditch and came to a sloping earthy space, a well and sagaya with rows of earthen water jars beside it; women in trailing blue carrying skins of water, and on a rise of about 6 metres, up a cobbly way, the white gate of the town."

The other diaries are entitled *Beyond Euphrates 1928-33*, *The Coast of Incense 1933-39* and *Dust in the Lion's Paw 1939-46* (all published by Century).

War-torn Afghanistan is another country that is losing its heritage. The story of that past glory is well told by Eric Newby in a reprint of *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* (Picador). My time at Washington State University had an Afghan connection through Rafi Samizay, a Kabul refugee architect who left his homeland six years ago. His contribution to understanding

that remote country is a finely illustrated textbook *Traditions of Architecture of Afghanistan* compiled with Stanley Hallet. A new edition is promised by Garland Publishing for next year and will be available through The Triangle Bookshop, 36 Bedford Square, London WC1.

I like to read a range of writing by an author in order to appreciate the ambience; for my summer's journey down the West Coast I was accompanied by Newby's other travel books — *On the Shores of the Mediterranean* (Picador) and *The Big Red Train Ride* (Penguin).

For those who want a British view of architectural life there is Appleyard's account of Richard Rogers' adventures to date, a thoroughly enjoyable story and one that rings true (Faber & Faber).

From time to time, I keep the stocking fillers bought for others and last January I delivered Arturo Soria's trilogy to Fred (a Mid-West architect and PhD aged 50) — only to reclaim it. Soria's classic covers Spanish history in the first 40 years of this century and includes the best eyewitness account of the siege of Madrid (1937-38). Fred had been to Guernica and the Basque country in 1984 without knowing anything of the bombing of April 26, 1937, nor of Picasso's famous painting, nor of the Spanish Civil War.

He had spent a year or so in Afghanistan, so my previous Christmas gift to him was Newby's *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush*. Blank, though generous, is careful and by subtle questioning discovered that Fred didn't read much. Tint settled matters, Soria came back to my shelves and was re-read with increased delight. The trilogy is autobiographical and called *The Forge* (pre-1914 Spain), *The Track* (Morocco in the 20s) and *The Clash* (The Civil War).

Long plane flights are always my excuse for ear plugs and a solid spell of bookworming. Peter Fleming's *Brazilian Adventure* kept me happy in mid-air on the way to Moscow. I recommend it to those readers lucky enough to be flying off to the ski slopes for New Year. I should explain that Brazil seemed to me to be a promised land in 1949 and the first sight of Kodak coloured slides (Basil Marx and Neymeyer) confirmed my resolve to immigrate once an ARIBA was obtained. I made a start on background reading. Fleming's spellbound adventures being the first to fire my imagination. (Peter was brother to Ian "James Bond" Fleming.)

Reality hit home in 1950 with a failed thesis and the discovery that the Brazilians require emigrants to retake their exams in Portuguese. So, I have never seen Brazil or the Amazon other than through writers' eyes, but that prospect is one of the delights of being an armchair traveller, whether surreptitiously at the drawing board or openly by the log fire this Christmas holiday.

My personal stocking this year is filled with Jelliffe's *Landscape of Man and Mythology: The English House*, available cheap at the RIBA bookshop.

Architects lock antlers in Stag Place contest

RICHARD Rogers, Terry Farrell and Arup Associates are heading a list of eight architects competing to design a £30 million redevelopment of London's Stag Place for developer Land Securities.

The other five invited contestants are Ahrends Burton & Koralek, Richard Horden, Kenzie Lovell Partnership, William Whitfield and Skidmore Owings & Merrill.

Land Securities has launched two separate competitions running in tandem to find a "fresh and original" approach to the redevelopment of the 2ha site in Victoria.

The first competition is for replacement buildings on the site of the soon-to-be-demolished Eland House (marked with an arrow in the photograph), occupied by the DoE. The second competition is for a "creative design solution" to improve the large triangular piazza in front of Eland House.

Assessors are: Alex Gordon, Michael Metcalfe, John Partridge, Sir John Boynton and Inn Henderson.

Land Securities' last big architectural competition was the £30 million Grand Buildings scheme which attracted 287 entries but was branded a fiasco after the judges selected a scheme that was a replica of the facade of the existing building.

Richard Horden's scheme for Grand Buildings was shortlisted and singled out as "a strikingly original solution" but failed to make the final three. He is the only invitee for this scheme who entered for Grand Buildings.

William Whitfield, who has a respected track record in developments of this kind and is a keen conservationist of historic buildings, was chairman of the assessors in the Grand Buildings competition.

The Stag Place competition will be run in a single stage with up to three finalists being submitted to Land Securities for final selection.

The competition started this month and the winner will be announced in summer next year.

Transatlantic team for London Bridge City

D Y DAVIES are to work with Philip Johnson and John Burgee on the second phase of London Bridge City — the massive office development on the south bank of the Thames.

D Y Davies, one of the UK's three architect practices quoted on the Unlisted Securities Market, are to implement Johnson & Burgee's designs for the site.

The instruction is D Y Davies' largest and should boost the firm's profits when work starts on site in the middle of next year. Burgee & Johnson will employ Davies, although the appointment was approved by the site's owner, the Kuwait-

owned St Martins Property Corporation.

St Martins has outline planning consent under a special development order for a 108,000sq m office scheme. This will cost at least £120 million to build.

"We're delighted," said David Davies, chairman and founder of D Y Davies. He expects to have several architects based in Johnson & Burgee's New York office to advise on the effects of UK construction regulations on design.

St Martins has yet to appoint an interior designer for the scheme.

Lasting material

CONCRETE that will last 500 years has been developed by Yekalay & Co according to a report in the *Japan Economic Journal*.

Using two special ingredients, the company has produced a concrete so dense that it shuts out harmful substances in the atmosphere, and claims it has a life expectancy 10 times that of ordinary concrete.

Cardiff arts

THE Welsh Arts Council has commissioned theatre Consultants Carr & Angier to prepare a design study for Cardiff's proposed arts centre (News December 17).

Four sites are being considered. The favourite is in Cardiff's docklands.

Building output

NEW housebuilding, which increased by 10.7 per cent in the first nine months of this year over last year, has fuelled a 2.6 per cent rise in construction output according to the latest figures from the DoE.

Architect robbed

ARCHITECT Peter Ahrends was robbed at knife-point at his Camden home last week.

Ahrends, a partner in Ahrends Burton & Koralek was held at knife-point for half an hour by three men who forced their way into his house looking for cash, jewellery and a safe.

The three eventually fled taking Ahrends' car, two stereo systems and a video recorder.

Cladding bill

MORE than £2 million has been spent on repair work on the New Scotland Yard building in the last two years according to the Home Office.

The cladding replacement programme which started in 1985 has so far cost the Government £2,156,000.

Defects hope

HOUSES listed under the Housing Defects Act 1984 have received a massive vote of confidence with 29 of the 30 largest building societies saying they would still lend on properties designated.

News

Competition to plug urban design gap

URBAN design is the theme of the fifth RIBA international student design competition, which last year attracted more than 1,000 entries making it the largest architectural competition in the world.

"Demonstrate to Richard Rogers and his fellow jurors your skill as an urban designer", says the brief for the competition, which is called "New in the Old".

Entrants must design a building to fill a gap in an urban environment of their own choice — they can assume the removal of any buildings to create the gap.

The brief also requires that buildings should "connect the ceremonies of the space to the ceremonies of your design" and suggests that "a successful programme will probably be for a public building".

"Your buildings will be judged, not as mere facade

making, but against the total life of the city", it says.

First prize is £2,000, second £1,250 and third, £1,000. Closing date for entries is noon on May 1 1987 at the RIBA headquarters.

Other assessors include Courtenay Blackmore, Denis Serjeant and Graham Stirk. Blackmore directed the construction of Rogers' Lloyd's building. Serjeant is an architect and teacher and surveyor to the Royal Academy, while Stirk is an architect with the Richard Rogers Partnership.

Building logo

THE Faculty of Building is promoting a competition to design its new logo.

More details from Faculty of Building, 12 High Street, Elstree, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 3EP.



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1947, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959, 1961, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023, 2025, 2027, 2029, 2031, 2033, 2035, 2037, 2039, 2041, 2043, 2045, 2047, 2049, 2051, 2053, 2055, 2057, 2059, 2061, 2063, 2065, 2067, 2069, 2071, 2073, 2075, 2077, 2079, 2081, 2083, 2085, 2087, 2089, 2091, 2093, 2095, 2097, 2099, 2101, 2103, 2105, 2107, 2109, 2111, 2113, 2115, 2117, 2119, 2121, 2123, 2125, 2127, 2129, 2131, 2133, 2135, 2137, 2139, 2141, 2143, 2145, 2147, 2149, 2151, 2153, 2155, 2157, 2159, 2161, 2163, 2165, 2167, 2169, 2171, 2173, 2175, 2177, 2179, 2181, 2183, 2185, 2187, 2189, 2191, 2193, 2195, 2197, 2199, 2201, 2203, 2205, 2207, 2209, 2211, 2213, 2215, 2217, 2219, 2221, 2223, 2225, 2227

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Review

Final thoughts on the Academy

As the "Fosters, Rogers, Stirling" exhibition draws to a close on December 21, *BD* publishes the last reviews.

Christopher Knight

WHICH is the more star-struck — the Royal Academy or its three superstars themselves, dazzled by their own brilliance in an otherwise apparently starless sky?

The public is led to believe in them as supermen able to conceive the design and direct the execution of giant projects single-handed. But a good building, as Corbusier said, is many men thick. Here we see nobody else.

Yet in the 1980s the individual designer has less control, and the creation of a building of architectural quality is more than ever a collective process. Post-Modern tackiness is a feeble reaction to this.

In this show the public is given no explanation of the design process in general or of the particular works displayed, ordained and constrained as they were by clients, cash, and politics. The three built projects at least demonstrate that compromise is not inevitable, or can at least be well-concealed. The three unbuilt schemes tell another story if you stop to think.

The exhibition is subliminal propaganda for an anachronistic concept of the architect as artist, yet it does nothing to explain the architectural thought which crystallises the client's brief. The public can easily understand and worldly constraints while remaining blind to the architecture.

Christopher Knight is an architect in West London.

Tony Forward

THREE cheers for the Royal Academy — and for the exhibition sponsors — for putting on a major architectural exhibition which is attracting the general public and not just professionals.

Poster's show is brilliantly attractive — not only the immaculate models that one expects, but beautiful images of the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank changing rhythmically on an array of five large screens, accompanied by evocative Chinese music. No wonder the seats opposite the screens are filled by a contented clientele, their senses soothed by seductive sound and vision. But Foster's second room is the more interesting. Here, again with the aid of superb models, we are reminded of a sad setback which occurred in 1985 when the BBC chickened out of building the new broadcasting centre.

Lost opportunity is also apparent in Rogers' room, in the spectacular model of "London as it could be", his bold idea of a pedestrian route from Piccadilly Circus to Waterloo shows what conviction could achieve — but given the prevailing commercial context what hope is there of implementation?

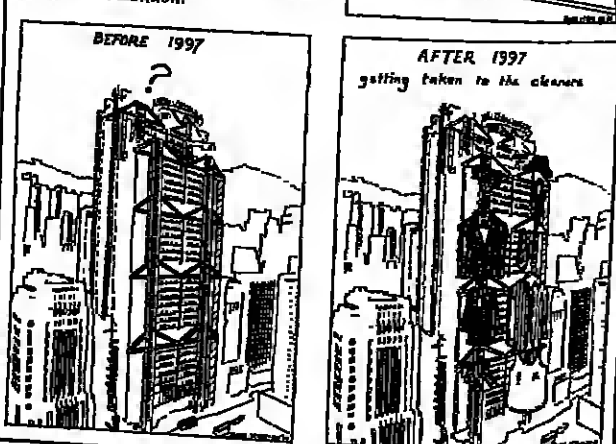
As for Stirling, the massive mock-up of the Staatsgalerie is a good appetizer for anyone who hasn't been to Stuttgart. But the design for the National Gallery extension makes one hungry for a building which, alas, we shall not see. Perverse some of the details may be — the heavy column, for example, slap in front of the entrance doors — yet Stirling's scheme shows a



All a question of hygiene

In response to your invitation for readers to review the Royal Academy exhibition, the following cartoon trilogy is on the theme of personal hygiene, James Utting.

James Utting practices as an architect in London.



subtlety, wit and imagination which Venturi will surely find hard to rival.

Tony Forward in the head of the school of architecture of Huddersfield Polytechnic.

Kenneth Lynn

THIS is the exhibition through which the public's currently jaundiced view of architecture is to be transformed into something more appreciative.

By all accounts the public is giving it every chance, thronging the three galleries in the hopeful search for a common wavelength on which to tune into this widely-debated and much-maligned commodity, and to reassess its relevance to their lives. If only the exhibition could meet them half-way.

Three stars shine in the octagonal ante-room, Rogers', Stirling's and Foster's potted biographies shed little light on the remote worlds of their displays.

In Rogers' room, remoteness is the key, with its anti-like population crowding the wide river-terraces of a London-as-it-could-be with the South Bank disavowed of Hungerford Bridge and embellished with a spidery skyline structure wildly out of scale with its function and the avowed humanistic aims of the proposal.

Stirling assures us that the only way to appreciate the

Staatsgalerie is to visit the actual building. The giant beak-like photographs are almost sufficiently alive with colour and movement to give the impression of being there, but the illusion is fatally compromised.

The scale of the building is confusing. Surely that undulating wall should be twice as high as it is, and the monumentality of the cladding is dwarfed by the size of the coloured-pipe "hand"-rails whose 12-inch diameter not even Big Jim could comfortably grasp. The architectural allusions are too arcane for the thousands of visitors who pass daily through its repertoire of architectural in-jokes.

Finally Foster, whose hi-tech expertise fails to illuminate his texts. A multi-screen slide-show recreates the bustling atmosphere of Hong Kong, and semi-oriental muzak accompanies the majestic rise of the mega-structure. The huge model is perched perversely high, converting the customary bird's-eye view into a frustrating worm's-eye view.

A mature woman, pondering the rotating model of Lloyd's hq, rejected the palliative: proffered by her young companion.

"Well", came the last-ditch attempt at justification, "it's designed to last for only 50 years". Kenneth Lynn is on architect in Chatham.

Scorpio



An arachnid guide to 1986

Quotes of the year

"I wanted to be an opera singer." — James Stirling at Colorado.

"Designing buildings can be so stressful." — Robert Venturi at the Savoy.

"I believe there is still a future for stone — for if I can dress stone why can't others?" Nicholas Ridley at the RIBA conference.

"We are satisfied that our approach to the project will provide an appropriate building." The BBC on the designs for its new headquarters.

"I think it is time to resurrect the principles by which classical Greece operated." — Prince Charles at the "Building Communities" conference.

"... the Rambo architecture of Europe's tallest building," Ian Latham on Canary Wharf Tower.

"It's a clear case of money versus architecture." — Stuart Lipton on rival designs for Spitalfields.

Fashions

In
Dealing floors
Going public
Brasseries
Inner cities
UDCs
The green belt
Fund-raising
Community groups
Foster's office furniture
New spirit
Surrey Docks
Loft conversions

Out
Walkways
Labour authorities
Cocktail bars
Covent Garden
The PSA
Conservationists
Grants
ISAA
The Barcelona Chair
Post-modernism
The Isle of Dogs
Jazzis

Disasters

Hull Cudat
The Architect
Portsdown estate
Grand Buildings
The M25
The Roundhouse
Leicester Square
The BBC

Triumphs

Community architecture
Building Design
Divis demolition
Aston University
The M25
The Alhambra
Charing Cross
Covent Garden

People

In
Nicholas Ridley
Leon Krier
Coin Street builders
Paul Getty II
Brian Barnes
Rod Hackney
James Stirling
Sam Webb
Jane Priestman

Editor's note: These lists are, of course, entirely reversible.

Messages

Farewell

GLC architects
Stuart Murphy
Roman Point
NELP
Huddersfield
David Pearce
Jonathan Glancey
Hilary King
Eleanora (briefly)
John Harris (maybe)

Hello

The Lloyd's building
Hongkong Bank
The London Residuary Body
Acanthus
Inner City Aid
Thomas Cooke
Clare Gallery
USM quotes
London Advisory Committee
Philip Johnson

Quotes I wish I'd heard

"It's a nice low-rise scheme." G Ware Travelstead.

"Modernism... I like it!" — Prince Charles.

"Everything's under control." — PSA.

"This design is faultless." — Sherban Cantacuzino.

"You'll see something well before Christmas." — Bob Venturi.

"No, president." — Patrick Harrison.

Statistics



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PLAYING WITH PHILOSOPHY

Christmas is synonymous with toys. Brian Hatton, in festive spirit, muses on their architectural implications.

"I THINK that children generally do exert influence on their toys, that their choice is directed by inclinations and desires, which, however, vague and unformulated, are nevertheless, very real. Still, I would not deny the contrary, that is to say, that toys act upon the child, particularly upon one with literary or artistic inclinations. One would hardly be surprised to see a child of that sort, whose parents take him to the theatre, already coming to consider the theatre as beauty in its most entrancing form."

Those words were written by Charles Baudelaire in his essay of 1859, "L'art moderne (The ethic of the toy). They remind me of remarks attributed to Churchill on the rebuilding of the House of Commons: "We influence the shape of the buildings around us, and they in turn influence us."

It is not mistaken then to see toys as the imaginative architecture of childhood and to link among them for signs of the obsessions and dilemmas of the adult environment.

Although Baudelaire went on in his essay to discuss those "philosophical toys" using scientific optical devices that prefigured the cinematograph, his reference to the theatre as the epitome of art then was germane, for there was perhaps no "ambitious" toy of the 19th century so popular among well-to-do families as the juvenile drama, performed in darkened sitting-rooms within ornate proscenium and printed cut-out figures.

Such miniature theatre was a toy within a toy, for it placed within the game of architecture the game of play-acting, and the cry that all the world's a stage referred in this case to all the toy world. For the striking thing about the toy-world as we find it in such toy museums as Pollock's in Scala Street (which grew originally out of a factory for toy theatres) and the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood is the degree to which it replicates every aspect of the adult world. If this universality is not reflected in most toyshops, it is a measure of the cliché-ridden impoverishment of today's commercial imagination, obsessed with Barbie-Doll look-alikes and Star Wars clones.

Even where a wider range of life is evoked by toys, the imitation is literal, stereotypical, and stifling to imaginative participation.

This was the critique made of modern toys by Roland Barthes in the essay he included on them in his anthology *Mythologies*. For Barthes the crime of toys today is that they always mean something, their inbuilt meanings foreclosing on the child's imagination, defining identities in advance and determining the social anticipations of the user. "Faced with this world of faithful and complicated objects, the child can only identify himself as owner, as user, never as creator, he does

not invent the world, he uses it; there are, prepared for him, actions without adventure, without wonder, without joy".

Barthes wants toys to liberate children from readymade social meanings by means of freely adaptive and inventive bricolage, subject to no sovereignty but an autonomous imagination bent on discovery: "The interest set of blocks, provided it is not too refined, implies a very different learning of the world; then, the child does not in any way create meaningful objects, it matters little to him whether they have an adult name; the actions he performs are not those of a user but a demiurge. He creates forms which walk, which roll, he creates life, not property."

However, in one respect, Barthes' remarks seem limited in a way characteristic of when he wrote them (the mid 50s). I wonder if he would still hold them today in an era of "post-structuralism".

It is an aspect with bearings not only on toys and toy architecture, but on the real thing. It is to do with the abstraction implicit in his preference for simple blocks. For it is not necessary, in order to escape the confinements of social stereotyping, to resort to what Barthes termed the "zero-degree" of signification, that is, abstraction.

The imagination can subvert, divert, pervert, invert, and revert the sign; it can take one thing intended for one purpose and use it as or for something else. In the words of the American artist Jasper Johns: "One thing used as another, one thing made of another". The ease of a bicycle saddle and handlebars and creating a monkey from moulds of a toy motor car are well-known, but it is the kind of thing that any imaginative child does.

Of course, if a child does, as I did when young, turn a toy tractor upside down to become a galley or paddleboat, you may say that one social meaning is merely being changed to another. But no negation can be complete; what counts is the inherent in what might be called the coefficient of imaginative sovereignty — and sheer joy — that comes with such a recycling.

Behind this might be discerned a reflection on the debate about Modernism and its after-

math. Frank Lloyd Wright, as well known, was given Froebel toy blocks as a child and later admitted their influence. There is no doubt of the "philosophical" value of their abstract architectural forms to Wright; moreover, abstract blocks of a comparable kind were developed as toys by the Bauhaus.

Yet a reading of the childhood obsessions of a surrealist such as Max Ernst would reveal a very different relation to toys and their meanings from that of Wright; one much closer, I

think, to those magic parlour entertainments like the toy theatre which influenced the imagination of 19th century symbolists such as Baudelaire, and which appear again in the "boxes" of Joseph Cornell — an imagination much closer to some of the contemporary architectural manifestations misguidedly termed "post-modern".

As an example I mention the unmistakable similarity between last year's Nato exhibition "Gamma City" and a toy grotto

of the kind adapted by commercial stores from central European Baroque culture and given an onerous shock in the Surrealist group shows of the 30s and 40s designed by Marcel Duchamp.

There was another sense in which the Gamma show bore a strong resemblance to toys such as complex dolls' houses and toy theatres, in that it made movables and furnishings, not walls, the catalysts and promoters of architectural space. A glance at the magnificent



A time for giving and redefining architectural stereotypes.



Wings and characters from toy theatre sheets in Pollock's Toy Museum.

collection of houses and theatres in the Bethnal Green museum will indicate that, for the child playing with these toys, the whole interest and motivation in them springs from the fictions, ceremonies and narratives conjured among the equipment and miniature utensils of the interior. Spatial division of the dolls' houses at Bethnal Green is quite rudimentary, even when the exterior is grandly designed and exquisitely built.

The priority of the interior narrative in toy architecture was something that was rather overlooked in a notable competition for architects dolls' houses run by *Architectural Design* a couple of years ago and published as *AD No 53*.

One of the few entrants to identify the priority in dolls' houses was Francis de Vallee, who wrote: "It quickly became evident to me that it is the contents of the dolls' house that forms the basis of the child's games and the stories he acts out with his dolls. It was therefore obvious that the whole process of architectural creation had to be reversed, in that the first step was to choose the objects that would create the living environ-

ment and only then could I design a structure to house them in."

De Vallee was also one of the few entrants to explore the possibility that toys do not need to be representational or in scale; that a soap holder can be a TV set, a spring a staircase, a cheese grater a fireplace.

This adaptation, to me, is the essence of toymaking as it is of art. One of the few others to do this was Jean Nouvel, who made a folding tool-box into a portable doll's house. On the other hand, the sense of private narrative can be elaborated to the point of ritual, as it was in an exquisite Japanese entry, which looked like a shrine or tabernacle. If this recalled any kind of toy house, it was like a eleanor urn in the form of a primordial dwelling of the kind discussed by Joseph Rykwert in *On Adam's House in Paradise*.

The problem with the AD competition, reflecting perhaps its historical moment, was preoccupation with its own room for exploration in this area, and I would suggest a competition set today ought to stipulate a brief for an inner city dolls' house, using recycled materials and with a collective function, for instance a whole doll's tower block with many flats — say one for each child in a nursery school. It would be interesting to know if the Soviets, at the height of the Constructivist passion for collective dwellings, ever explored the possibility of a "new type of dolls' house" along the lines of the blocks designed by Ginsburg and others. Or is the doll's house inextricably bound to bourgeois individualism? The winner of the AD competition, a gilded tower by Mike Gold, not only celebrated individualism, but the ego itself, for it was not a doll's house at all, but a Wendy House the size of a wardrobe.

Although the AD competition was ostensibly triggered by the publisher's fruitless search for a good doll's house for his daughter, it turned out to be an opportune moment. For it has to be said that much post-modern domestic architecture, from Venturi through Jeremy Dixon to the Jencks residence, has about it an unmistakably nursery or toy-town flavour.

It is as if, in reacting against Miesian abstraction, these architects felt that they had to resort to virtually infantile caricature and oversailing of representational features to make their point. This is by no means the first time infantilism has appeared in architecture. Anyone trying to understand the domestic and Garden City movements in Edwardian architecture ought to begin with a good read of Kenneth Graham's *Wind in the Willows*. Ratty, Badger, and Toad would have made ideal ellipses for Voysey, Baillie-Scott, and Lutyens respectively.

But the idea that serious design could look like a toy as well as a toy might look like design was not absent also from the Modern Movement. One of the directors of Peter Behrens'

firm AEG declared "an electric motor should look like a birthday present". Primitivism is a theme long explored by both art and architectural historians. But whereas artists such as Paul Klee and Lionel Feininger made explicit their debts to children's art and experience, and an artist-designer such as the Dadaist and remember that "Dada" meant "rocking-horse", and Paul Gauguin spoke of going back beyond European and Greek art "to the Dada of my nursery", Kiri Schwitters could make his great Merzbau into a kind of megastructure of gothic grottoes, harking back to the toy industries of the Black Forest and Nuremberg, there have been few open admissions from architects of inspiration from childhood imagination.

The expressionists were an exception, but few of their ideas, such as Bruno Taut's presentation in *Frühlicht* magazine of allotment huts as proletarian Wendy Houses, got very far.

My point is not that architects aren't influenced by childhood ideas, but that they don't readily admit it. It is arguable, for instance, that the most childlike architectural movement at present is the hi-tech work of architects such as Richard Rogers. Is it really much more than a fascination with Meccano and bits that "work"?

If one goes to a toyshop one sees in caricature and miniature the whole dilemma of contemporary architectural culture. Representation of the built environment in toydom falls into two incompatible categories. On the one hand there is the deathless iconography of late Victorian England: land of steam railways, parish churches, and timber halls. On the other hand there is the ecaophony of pseudo-technology: gizmos, space invaders, programmable robots, and computer graphics whose only iconography or human reference is to a sort of juvenile Mad Max. If anybody doesn't believe that there is a deep crisis in the culture, take a trip to a toyshop.

There are some toys that have tried to resolve the cultural schizophrenia and the Lego firm makes one of them. It recently organised an exhibition of structures built by invited architects under a title from Le Corbusier, "Architecture is a Magnificent Game". The results were astonishingly varied and inventive. Yet I have to say that none escaped a certain stilted quality that seems endemic to readymade systems.

In the end the complaint of Barthes, that too many manufactured toys tend towards stereotypicality, holds. It is as getting beyond readymade and prefabricated — modules — whether they are structural components, as in hi-tech, or packaged signifiers and aesthetic components, as in post-modern.

If toys are ceasing to refer to real life, architecture is approaching the condition of a toy, and a not very philosophical one at that.

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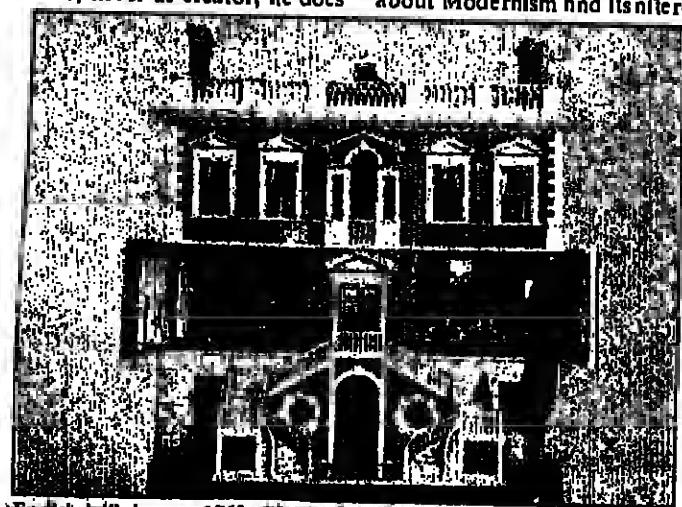


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English doll's house, c1760 with some later furnishings.

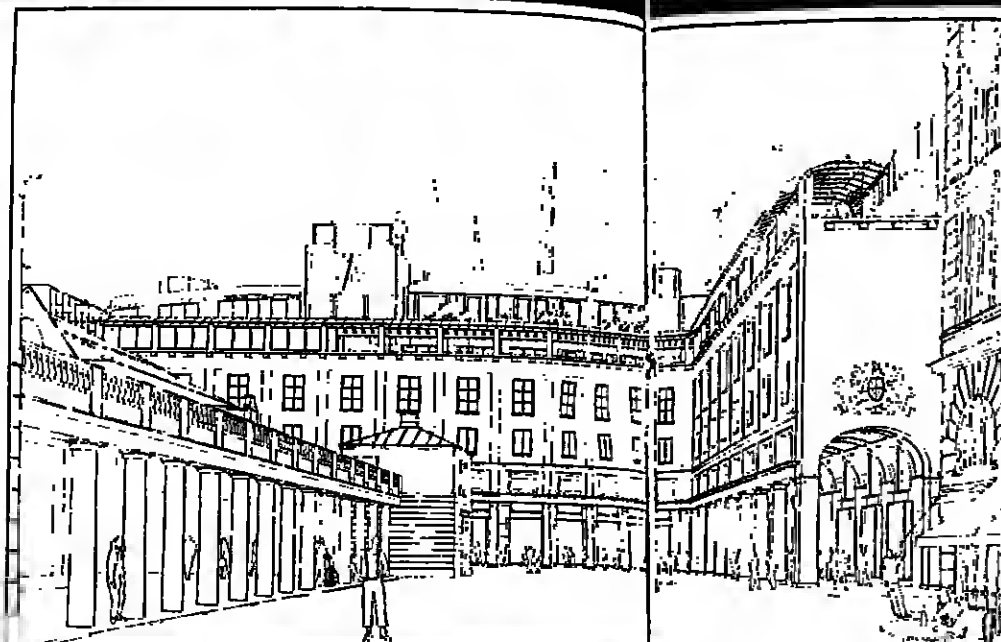


English doll's house, 1940.



Jeremy Dixon's masterful proposal for the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden (right), a competition he won with Building Design Partnership, swift planning approval and funding. The scheme will update the opera house facilities and backstage areas, reinstate a colonnade in the north-east corner of the piazza, provide a new entrance and grand spiral stair for rental.

Richard Rogers & Partners' new headquarters for Lloyd's of London (left) was completed to a somewhat mixed reception, apart, that is, from a sympathetic special number of the *Architectural Review*. The building is nonetheless a tremendous achievement for both architects and builders and represents a solitary symbol in the City of London of the potential of late 20th century architecture. Magnificent models by Terra of Lloyd's are featured in the "Foster, Rogers, Stirling" show at the Royal Academy that closes on Sunday.



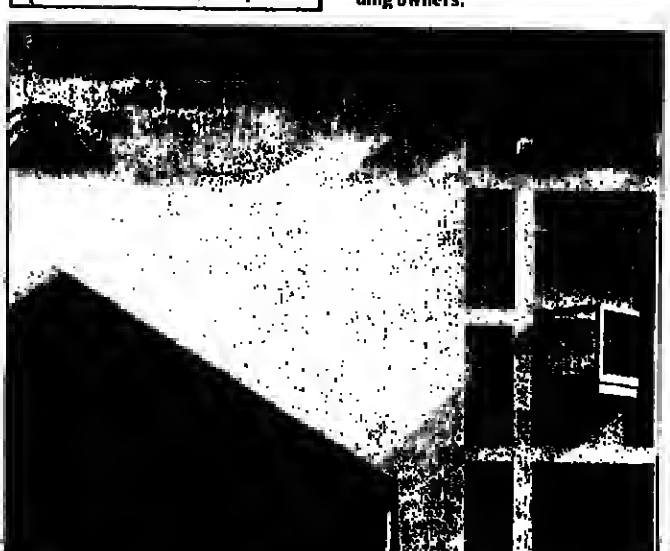
The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (above) was completed by Powell & Moya opposite Westminster Abbey. Elegant and dignified externally, there was a lot of internal space, and the building's design is a masterpiece of the site and functions of the building.

BD launched upon detailed proposals for Canary Wharf Tower, the 260m centrepiece of the massive £3 billion development. In the use of 1,700s when now looks set to go ahead.

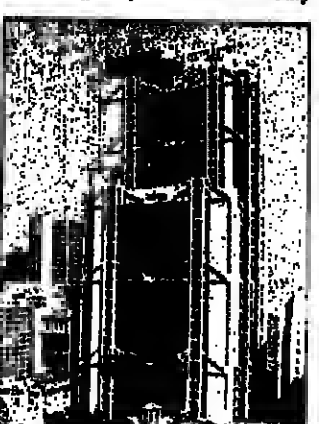
Designed by New York architects Kohn Pedersen Fox, who claim somewhat naively that their inspiration comes from the Houses of Parliament, this will be Europe's tallest tower, half as high again as the NatWest tower.



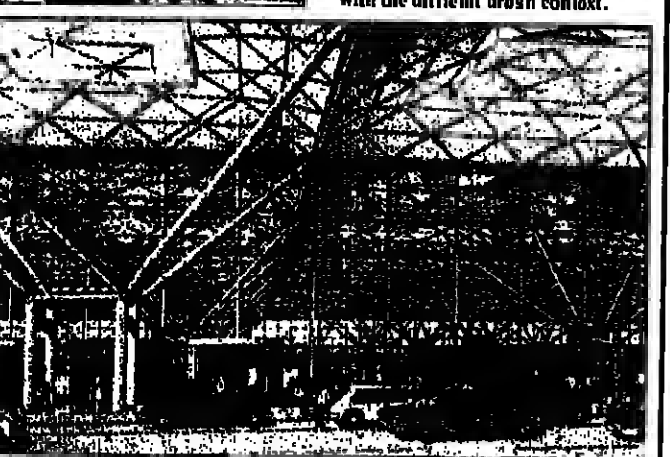
Peter Purnell bounced back after the rejection of his Alice tower at Mansinn House with twin proposals by James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, one of which retained the corner Mopple and Webb building (left) at the expense of a squat tower at the back of the site.



The Clarendon House for the Turner collection at the Tate (above), designed by James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, was finally completed and the rich collection is currently being hung for Royal opening in the Spring. The Clarendon is the best new gallery in London for many years and it will doubtless draw huge crowds to the Tate. The project is the first phase of Stirling's grand plan for the Tate Museums to be built incrementally over the next decade, resulting in a complex of scale that matches Stirling's international status.



Foster Associates finished the spectacular Hongkong & Shanghai Bank (left), a magnificent and necessarily expensive combination of craftsmanship and technology. They unveiled proposals for the terminal at Stansted airport (below), a building type that seems to offer Foster the ideal vehicle for his architectural preoccupations.



CIVIC SHIELD UPDATE

SPECIAL FEATURE

TRYDAN DE CYMRU
SOUTH WALES
ELECTRICITY

Civic Shield gets the thumbs up from Wales and West.

Of the 3,000 or so dwellings owned by Wales and West Housing Association, the 36 flats and 10 houses at Ynysybwl, near Pontypridd, were a cause for concern.

The severe weather conditions in this Welsh valley had made the mould and condensation problems even worse.

So it was these 46 dwellings which Wales and West chose as their pilot scheme for adopting the Electricity Board's Civic Shield Award.

As is usual with this scheme, the work involved minimum fuss and disturbance so it wasn't necessary for the tenants to be moved out.

In just two months, from January to March 1983, all 46 homes had been upgraded to the Electricity Board's Civic Shield Award standards.

By converting the homes to the Economy 7 tariff, improving the insulation, installing new style heaters and converting the water



heating to Economy 7, they became warm and comfortable with affordable running costs — plus very happy tenants and an ecstatic housing manager into the bargain.

Consequently, Wales and West actually found themselves faced with a waiting list for homes which had previously been as hard to let as they were to heat!

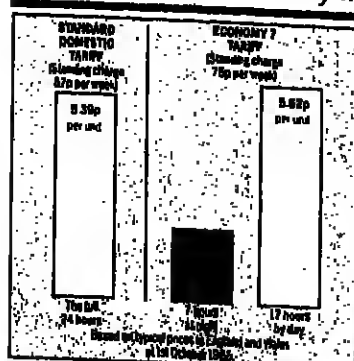
Their pleasure at the cost-effectiveness of the whole package — from installation right through

to operation — speaks for itself: by 1985 all Wales and West's 800 dwellings in the South Wales Electricity Board area had been upgraded in accordance with DEN 3 guidelines and had received the Civic Shield Award.

In fact, they have now completed the upgrading of all their electrically heated homes.

As usual, the homes weren't the only things we converted!

Less than half price electricity from Economy 7.



Economy 7 night time electricity is less than half price compared with today's standard domestic rate. So it actually saves money on heating and water heating.

The adjacent diagram shows you how Economy 7 works. Whereas the standard domestic tariff has a single rate for units used, the Economy 7 tariff has two rates — one for day, another for seven hours at night.

Tenants are able to get cheap heating because the stylish new slimline storage heaters take in heat overnight during the cheap

Economy 7 period, and the efficient insulation enables it to be stored. The heaters then give out heat gradually throughout the day, to keep the homes comfortable and warm.

Likewise, the Economy 7 hot water cylinder takes full advantage of the overnight cheap rate electricity by switching on automatically during the night. So in the morning, there's a whole tankful of hot water heated at the cheap rate to provide the bulk of tenants' household needs during the day.

Now these tenants are the envy of all their friends and relations.

After hearing about Civic Shield's success from the South Wales District Energy Marketing Engineer, Monmouth District Council decided to install an Economy 7 heating package in one of their biggest problem areas — pre-fabricated homes with no proper heating system at all.

The homes were freezing and, like most buildings of this type, there was the added problem of that the thin concrete external walls required extensive repair.

The Civic Shield Award Scheme, with its comprehensive insulation package and Economy 7 heating and hot water, was the ideal solution.

The lofts were insulated and draught-proofing was fitted round doors and windows. And lining the inner surface of the walls with insulation board not only overcame the problem of heat loss, it also covered up the repairs.

This insulation, combined with the introduction of the Economy 7 tariff, new-style storage heaters and the specially insulated Economy 7 hot water cylinders, has now made these homes and their tenants beautifully warm and comfortable.

In fact, as this happy couple tell us, "All our friends and relations are very envious. Now they come round to us for a warm!"

Monmouth District Council are so pleased, they'll consider the Civic Shield solution on all their pre-fabricated homes in future. To date, they have implemented it in over 300 homes, pre-fabricated and

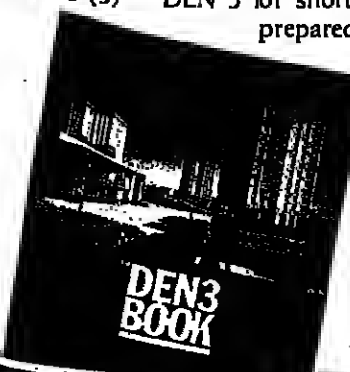


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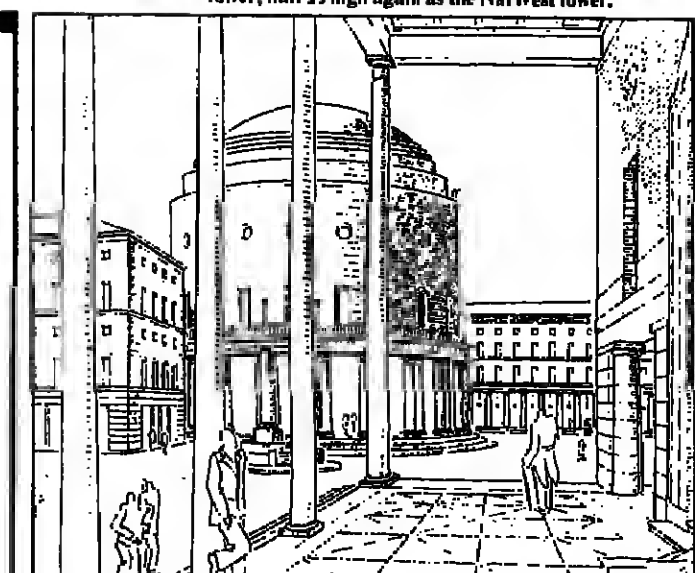
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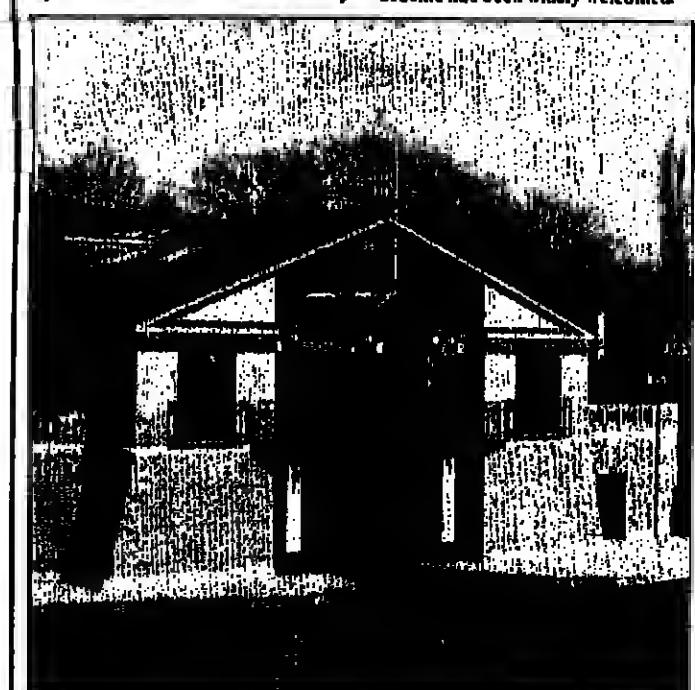
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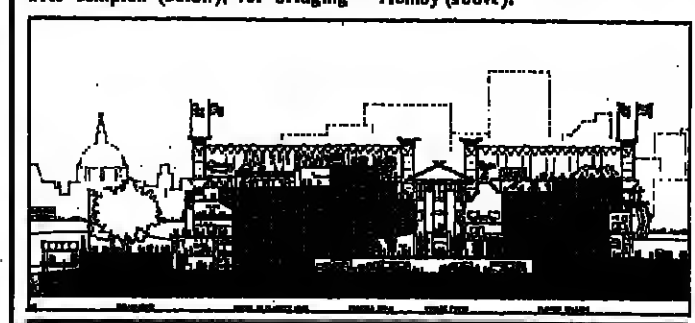
CASE HISTORY: MONMOUTH



Leon Krier proposed universal Classism for a quarter of Spitalfields. His masterplan was commissioned by Stuart Lipton and Godfrey Bradman of Rosemugh-Stanhope as a rival proposal to an earlier scheme by Richard MacCombe and Fitzroy



The Terry Parroll Partnership were among the most prominent of practitioners with head-to-head proposals for improving the South Bank arts complex (below), for bridging



London Wall in the City and for putting offices over Charing Cross Station. The practice finished the new headquarters for the Royal Regatta at Henley (above).

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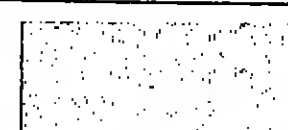
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Applications in the form of a Curriculum Vitae (2 copies) including the names and addresses of two referees should be sent to the Personnel Department. The closing date for this position is 19th December 1986.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brian Clouston & Partners Ltd

announce that from 1st January 1987 Paul Young will retire from the Company in order to concentrate on a new joint venture.
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The successful candidate will undertake design tuition with responsibility for a specialist option, coordinate aspects of the landscape architecture programme and contribute towards the teaching of landscape design theory and course development within the context of the new Faculty.
Active research interests would be an advantage.

Salary Scale:
Lecturer II: £8,695-£13,866
Senior Lecturer: £12,615-£14,820 (bar) £15,873
Details from: Mrs H. Gale, Staffing Officer, Leeds Polytechnic, 29 Queen Square, Leeds LS2 8AP. Tel: (0532) 482855. Closing date: 5 January 1987.
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We can offer you a friendly and dynamic working environment with an excellent salary, company car and the full range of benefits associated with a major international company.

Please apply with full CV to: C. J. Buddery, Dip. Arch., RIBA, Regional Architect, Wimpey Homes Holdings Limited, 250 Toddington Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, LU4 9EE.

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Application forms are available from the undersigned, telephone (0449) 720711 ext 200, and should be returned by 12th January, 1987.

M. B. GOWERS, Chief Technical Officer, Council Offices, NEEDHAM MARKET, Ipswich, IP8 8DL.

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Project Architect

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In this High Priority Council Project you will be expected to work from a Site Office; and to be committed to tenant participation throughout all stages of the design and construction process. You must be committed to developing your skills in a imaginative way to make a strong contribution to the economic, social and physical regeneration of the estate.

The post requires 3 years post professional registration experience, or between 10 and 12 years relevant experience in an architectural office, which should include 4 or 5 years experience of job running.

Job share applications will be welcomed with or without a partner.

Interviews will be held on 18th February 1987.

Application forms are available from Recruitment Office, Town Hall, Mere Street, E3 1EA or telephone 01-886 5331 (24 hour answering service) quoting reference RP111/SD.

Closing date: 18th January 1987.

The council intends to decentralise its services, therefore the duties, hours of work or location of this post may be subject to change.

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We positively welcome applications from black people, disabled people and women where they are under-represented in particular jobs.

APPOINTMENTS

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Barnes SW13
Tel: 01-878 4667

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MR K. J. WOODWARD ON 01-234 4225
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(Per at £12312)

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Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council,
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This post is based in the Technical Services Department of the Estate Services Division and the postholder is responsible, under the direction of senior professional staff, for providing general technical assistance. Applicants should hold an ONC or an alternative qualification in an appropriate subject and have seven years' relevant experience - or - HNC or an alternative qualification in an appropriate subject and four years' relevant experience - or - HNC, or an alternative qualification in an appropriate subject and have obtained a Diploma in Environmental Engineering or the Polytechnic of the South Bank or have passed the Part 2 examination of the RICS. Application form and job description from Regional Personnel Division, Gateway House, Piccadilly South, Manchester, M60 7LP. Tel: 061-235 9456 ext 8397. Please quote reference number 8178/A. Closing date for receipt of completed application forms 12.00 noon Wednesday, 31 December, 1986.

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Job descriptions and application
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Hampton Court fire system modified

MODIFICATIONS to Hampton Court's automatic fire detection system have been made and other improvements in security and management arrangements are also in operation.

The improvements to the fire system have been made in response to the recommendations made by Sir John Gorlick in his report, published in July, on last March's disastrous fire.

All the control panels to the fire systems have been modified so that switches cannot be left in the "reset" position, lockable covers have been installed and a memory facility has been incorporated.

The environment secretary Nicholas Ridley announced the changes in a written reply to a Parliamentary question from Toby Jessel MP for Twickenham in whose constituency the palace lies.

Ridley admitted that the complexity of the new system had caused problems because procedures were not made sufficiently clear.

"The lessons we have learned will be applied at Hampton Court and at other buildings for which my department is responsible," said Ridley.

Better fire drills involving the fire brigade have taken place and arrangements have been made for more effective training with more provision of advice on the efficient operation of the fire system.

The Property Services Agency is checking fire detection systems installed in other government buildings and considering whether systems should be installed where none exist at present.

Sir John Gorlick's report has also been sent to other interested bodies such as English Heritage and the National Trust.

DoE urges checks on overcladding to block fire hazards

FIRE risks inherent in overcladding systems for tower blocks have been identified in a new BRE report. The DoE has called for systems to be checked and recommended that fire barriers be fitted where appropriate.

The BRE's research has revealed that with some overcladding systems there is an increased risk of fire spread — especially vertical spread where

overcladding systems incorporate combustible elements. Where such cladding is aluminium, BRE's lab tests have

By Lee Mallett

shown that a fire within the cavity behind the cladding (the cavity can either be designed or "fortuitous") can melt the aluminium and burn through to the surface several storeys above.

The flames could re-enter a tower block through windows.

However the BRE says that "fires of such severity are rare", and points out that "multi-storey blocks have been clad for 10 years with systems which have a potential fire-spread within cavities" but no fires featuring excessive vertical spread have been reported.

The DoE has advised that both existing and proposed overcladding systems should be examined to see if modifications are needed.

It recommends that for completed overcladding systems made of aluminium with a combustible insulant, fire barriers should be fitted if a suitable opportunity arises.

For proposed sheet overcladding systems, local authorities should specify either non-combustible insulants or fire barriers every two storeys.

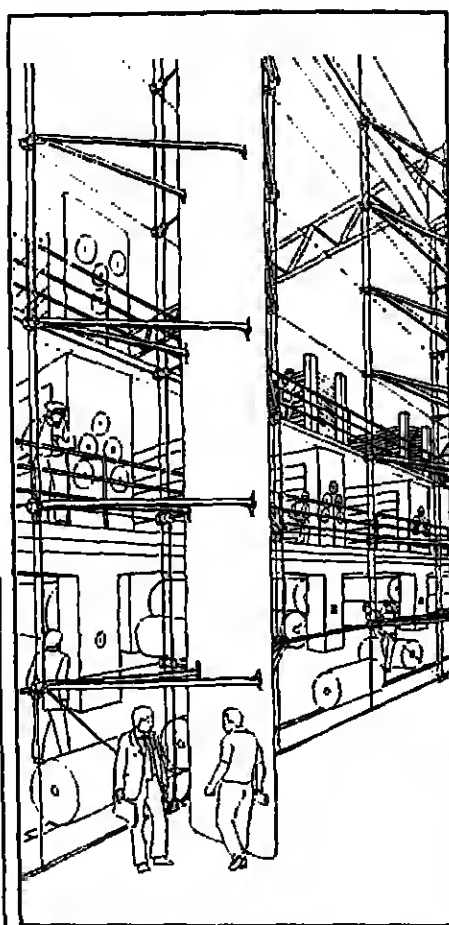
With other types of external cladding fire spread is likely to be small, according to the DoE, but it makes several recommendations where a non-sheeted system is proposed.

For rendered metal lathing systems using thermoplastic insulant, authorities should specify sufficient metal fasteners to stabilise the cladding and fit fire barriers every two storeys.

Where a thermosetting insulant is used sufficient metal fixings should be specified to stabilise the cladding.

Fire barriers which also support the cladding should be specified for every storey where glass fabric reinforced thin renders with a thermoplastic insulant are used.

Copies of the report costing £25 are available from the BRE, Garston, Watford WD2 7JR.



Could this be the best national newspaper building in England since the *Financial Times* current City headquarters, Brad House, was completed in the 1950s?

The "Pink" tower is a tower to keep up standards than other papers, it seems. In a detail of its new centre, designed by Nicholas Grimshaw Partners with Robb Design Partnership, Bradford. The £7.5m just reached an agreement with the LDDC for a site in the corner of the junction between the A13 and eastern side of the Blackwall tunnel northern approach road.

A long "heretic" will present itself to travellers on the A13 night — 100m of double-width offset presses will be visible. Grimshaw was £7.5m award for local architecture in 1981 and was an assessor the award in 1984. Robinson Design Partnership designs the Bradford Telegraph & Argus press hall, completed 1981.

Whitechapel Building setback

A LOCALLY developed plan for Whitechapel has received a setback with the neighbourhood committee of councillors voting five to three in favour of a rival scheme by Pengap.

The plan has been coordinated by the Tower Hamlets Environment Trust and involves a 22,000sq m shopping centre, light industrial workshops and more than 300 homes.

The final decision between Pengap, THET and a third scheme by Charterhall will be made by a full meeting of Tower Hamlets council at the end of January.

Diary date

THE receiving date for the Royal Scottish Academy summer exhibition next year will be March 23.

Building optimism

A GROWTH of 3 per cent in construction industry output has been predicted in a report by the Building & Civil Engineering Economic Development Committee for 1987.

The report also predicts further rise of 1 per cent output in 1988 but expresses concern that the South gains such a large share of market.

The best prospects appear to be in office construction "unparalleled growth" of 10 per cent predicted in 1986 and 5 per cent in 1988.

More modest growth of 2 per cent is forecast for private housing market but public sector housing output is set to fall by 27 per cent between 1985 and 1988, falling trend in industrial building will continue.



Newcastle College, Susan Bradbury, stained glass window.



BOC Group, Sol Le Witt, mural.



Mobil North Sea Limited, Brian Kelly, untitled.

Mobil tops art awards

Those second Art & Work Awards were won by Mobil North Sea, the BOC Group and Newcastle-upon-Tyne college of arts and technology. Richard Rogers presented the awards at the Royal Academy.

Mobil's prize, sponsored by developer Capital & Counties, was for the most outstanding contribution to art in the working environment. BOC won the award for the art collection it has installed in its new headquarters at Wincoburn. It includes works by Sol Le Witt and Gilbert & George. Space Planning Services sponsored the award.

Susan Bradbury's stained glass windows won the Newcastle college's award for a site-specific commission in the school of art and design, sponsored by IBM. Art for Offices sponsored a special award which went to the Forestry Commission for the sculptors' working environment it has set up in Grizedale Forest and an outdoor theatre.

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Grizedale Forest, Richard Harris, Quarry Structure.